

# Operation Mockingbird: CIA Controls The Mainstream Media

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*CIA-controls-the-mainstream-media*

Many times I have asserted in these pages that the [Mainstream Media is engaged in propaganda](#) to sway the minds of the nation to support the causes of their business or political overlords. Many people have written that off as a “crazy conspiracy theory”. However, there is proof that the CIA has had a long running program called **Operation Mockingbird**, whose main purpose is to attempt to influence opinion through the use of covert propaganda. They accomplish this goal by having paid CIA employees working

undercover (and sometimes openly) for different news and media organizations around the world.

## How The Mainstream Media Pushes Propaganda



*2000px-CIA.svg*

In 1948, the CIA appointed [Frank Wisner](#) the director of the Office of Special Projects. Later renamed the Office of Policy Coordination, the group became the CIA's covert action branch. The group concentrated on “propaganda, economic warfare; preventive direct action, including sabotage, anti-sabotage, demolition and evacuation measures; subversion against hostile states, including assistance to underground resistance groups, and support of indigenous anti-Communist elements in threatened countries of the free world”. Under the OPC, Operation Mockingbird was created to promote the CIA's views and push propaganda. Operation Mockingbird achieved this by recruiting leading American journalists, and funding some student and cultural organizations, and magazines as fronts. By the early 1950s, the CIA ‘owned’ respected members of The New York Times, Newsweek, CBS and other mainstream media outlets. Within a few years, Operation Mockingbird had major influence over 25

newspapers and wire agencies. By the late 1950's some reports claim that Operation Mockingbird had 3,000 salaried, and contract workers embedded in the **mainstream media**.

By the mid 1960's, some independent journalists became aware of the CIA's subversion of the freedom of the press and began publishing exposes about Operation Mockingbird. Random House published [Invisible Government](#) by David Wise and Thomas Ross in 1964. The book exposed the role of the CIA in foreign policy. Rumors are that The CIA considered buying up the entire printing of Invisible Government, but this idea was rejected when Random House responded by saying that if this happened, they would simply print a second edition. Further details of Operation Mockingbird were revealed as a result of the [Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities](#) in 1975 (also known as the Senator Frank Church investigations). Senator Church was able to identify over 50 mainstream media journalists who were employed directly by the CIA. Church pointed out that this was probably only the tip of the iceberg because the CIA refused to “provide the names of its media agents or the names of media organizations with which they are connected”. According to a report released by Congress in the

wake of the Church investigations in 1976, “The CIA currently maintains a network of several hundred foreign individuals around the world who provide intelligence for the CIA and at times attempt to influence opinion through the use of covert propaganda. These individuals provide the CIA with direct access to a large number of newspapers and periodicals, scores of press services and news agencies, radio and television stations, commercial book publishers, and other foreign media outlets.” By some accounts, over a thousand books were produced, subsidized or sponsored by the CIA before the end of 1967.

Senator Frank Church argued that misinforming the world cost American taxpayers an estimated \$265 million a year.

In 1977, a Rolling Stone magazine article written by [Carl Bernstein](#) (of Woodward and Bernstein Watergate fame) alleged that over 400 mainstream media journalists were in the employ of the CIA. He also claimed that one of the most important journalists contracted by Operation Mockingbird was Joseph Alsop, who wrote for over 300 different newspapers. Other journalists implicated by the Rolling Stone investigation to have been willing to promote the views of the CIA were Stewart Alsop (New York Herald Tribune), Ben Bradlee (Newsweek), James Reston (New York Times), Charles Douglas Jackson (Time Magazine), Walter Pincus (Washington Post), William C. Baggs (The Miami News), Herb Gold (The Miami News) and Charles Bartlett (Chattanooga Times).

In February 1976, the newly appointed Director of the CIA, George H. W. Bush, announced a new policy: “Effective immediately, the CIA will not enter into any paid or contract relationship with any full-time or part-time news correspondent accredited by any U.S. news service, newspaper, periodical, radio or television network or station.” He added that the CIA would continue to “welcome” the voluntary, unpaid cooperation of journalists.

## Has Operation Mockingbird Continued to this Day?

This new policy made no statement about whether the CIA would continue to embed their agents within the entertainment industry, or push propaganda to unwitting journalists hungry for a scoop.



*Was Chuck Barris a CIA Operative working under Operation Mockingbird?*

In 1984, famed Television producer Chuck Barris (creator of The Newlywed Game, The Dating Game and The Gong Show) released a book titled “[Confessions of a Dangerous Mind](#)” ([made into a movie in 2003](#)). Chuck Barris claims in the book that while working in Hollywood, he was secretly a CIA spy. One must wonder if Barris was, in fact, an operative working under Operation Mockingbird. Most news agencies have pushed the idea that [Barris’s story is an elaborate fabrication](#). Considering these journalists should have known about Operation Mockingbird, and Barris was at the height of his career while Operation Mockingbird was going strong, doesn’t it seem odd that they are so quick to write off his story as fabrication? It seems that these stories to discredit him may be a part of a continuing Operation Mockingbird.

In 1998, Journalist [Steve Kangas](#) alleged that [Richard Mellon Scaife](#), the owner of Pittsburgh Tribune, and The American Spectator, was a CIA asset that ran “a front to disseminate CIA propaganda around the world.” In 1999 Kangas was found dead from a gunshot wound to the head in a bathroom adjacent to Scaife’s office. The death was ruled a suicide, but because of inconsistencies in the police, and coroners report, many are skeptical. In an article in Salon Magazine, (19th March, 1999) [Andrew Leonard](#)

asked: “Why did the police report say the gun wound was to the left of his head, while the autopsy reported a wound on the roof of his mouth? Why had the hard drive on his computer been erased shortly after his death?...)

While watching the news these days, it seems obvious that major stories are continuously swept under the rug in favor of celebrity gossip. Racial strife is promoted were none exists, and stories that really aren’t important to anyone dominate the headlines while world changing events are buried on the backpage.

Do you think the CIA is still in control of the Mainstream Media? Let us know in the comments below.

**Additional Information:**